1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

for example, tapir. A large pit is dug in the ground and lined with 252
stones. A fire is built within the hole until the stones are glowing. The ashes and embers are then removed, the stones are covered with leaves, and the meat, carefully wrapped, is placed inside and buried under a thick layer of soil. Twelve hours later the meat is taken out, perfectly cooked. Fish are broiled on a babracot, then stored on an indoor platform.

Women pound maize with heavy wooden pestles in cylindrical wooden mortars, which are sometimes large enough to accommodate three workers at a time and too heavy to be moved (fig. 58, *d*). They also have smaller mortars with which they use stone pestles. Maize flour is prepared as mush or is kneaded into dough and baked in ashes. Maize kernels are often soaked in water to the point of rotting, mashed, kneaded into loaves with saliva added, and roasted in ashes.

The pith of pindo palms is crushed in a mortar, sifted, and roasted in a pan, just as with manioc flour.

Soup is made from husked, chewed, soaked, and pounded pine nuts. They are also roasted in the shell on the embers; pine-nut dough may also be kneaded into small loaves and baked in the ashes. Piñons are [251]
preserved in tightly closed baskets soaked in water for a month and a half. In the past salt was unknown; tart malagüeta berries (*Capsicum frutescens*) were used instead. [263]

To stir the fire or lift food to and from it, the *Caingang* use a curved withe (Manizer, 1930, pp. 772, 774; Henry, 1941, pl. 2, *f*).

HOUSES

Lozano (1873, 1:424) describes the *Caingang* or *Guayaná* hut as 342●
follows:

> They stick in the ground a long forked pole against which they lean crosswise four other poles. In this way they make four divisions covered with palm leaves. In each division lives a family with the children. Each compartment communicates with the other by small doors. In each community there are five or six such huts placed at convenient distance from each other so that everyone can hunt and fish.

This type of house has entirely disappeared among modern *Caingang*, but a few years ago the *Aweikoma* remembered it as the house of the open savannas and were able to reconstruct one (Henry, 1941, p. 186).

The more recent *Caingang* dwelling was a lean-to (fig. 56), which often was made into a gable-roofed hut when two structures of this type were joined. The *Aweikoma-Caingang* live either in an arched lean-to which is open on three sides or in a hut composed of two such units, the arches being made to descend to the ground at both ends (Henry, 1941,

1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

342 pp. 164–166). Such dwellings are thatched with palm fronds or comparable materials (fig. 57). Most *Caingang* groups live in houses identical to those of the *Caingué*. When on a journey the *Caingang* sleep

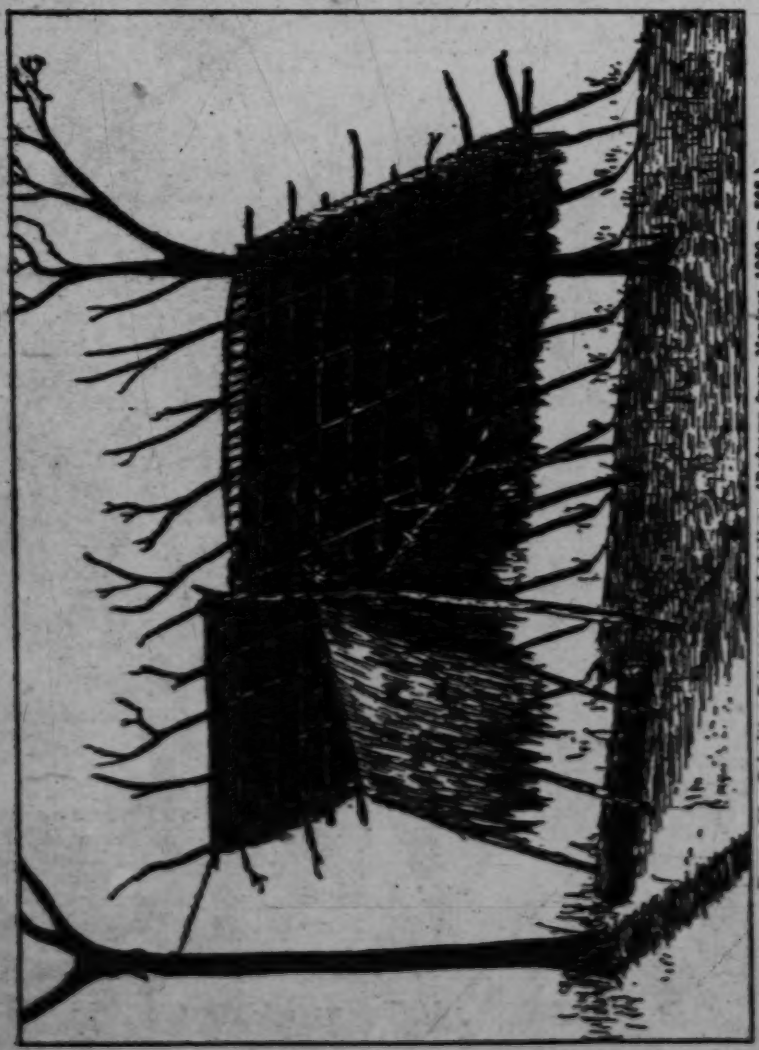


FIGURE 56.—Primitive Caingang wind shelter. (Redrawn from Manizer, 1880, p. 766.)

in flimsy shelters or rest in a sort of nest which they build in the top of a tree (Horta Barbosa, 1913, p. 35).

513 Hammocks of cotton are a recent *Caingang* acquisition. The ancient *Guayaná* slept, according to Portuguese chroniclers, on branches

1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

342

II

Nomadic Life

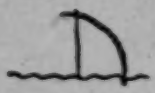
484 512 THE KAINGÁNG USED TO WANDER about in the forest in small bands searching for food. Even now when they go hunting they rarely stay even a week in one place. They fall asleep without plans for the morrow, and they awaken in the morning without any idea of what they are to do. A few words over the morning fire may decide them to move on, and in ten minutes their possessions will be packed into baskets. The father strides off carrying his weapons in his hands: the indispensable axe and a gun or a massive seven-foot bow and a dozen arrows, while the mother comes plodding behind with the basket full of household possessions and the remaining food, if they are lucky enough to have any, the baby perched atop the load and the brother or sister holding on to her left hand, the right bearing a smoking firebrand for use at the next camp.

342 The Kaingáng hate to build the frail little shelters they call houses, and they never do so until the rain is on them. I always had to argue with the Indians to help put up my tent. When the clouds piled up in the sky, the air grew sultry, and the sun changed from yellow to dull red, I would say to Chukembégn, "It looks like rain." With a deprecatory glance at the sky he would reply: "No, it's not going to rain—not today. Tomorrow maybe, but today, no." "But look at those clouds." "That's nothing; it will pass." "Yes, the way it passed yesterday. Let's get the tent up, Chukembégn." At last the tent would be put up, sometimes as the first drops fell or in a pouring rain. It was not laziness that made them so slow to put up my tent, for they too could always take advantage of it; but housebuilding is simply an annoyance, and they never raise a shelter even for themselves unless they are forced to. It rains several times a day at the new moon in fall and winter, but though they know this perfectly well, they will not build a

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma

342 house if the sky is clear when they make camp. In the night, when the rain finally does come, they either lie asleep where they are, start up and hurriedly throw together a house from whatever material happens to be lying about, or wander sleepily into the ethnologists tent, where they crowd together sleeping almost on top of one another. If the ethnologist descends from his hammock on such a night he steps on someone's face or kicks an infant in the ribs.

These houses that the Kaingáng are so loath to build are made by tying arched boughs to a high transverse that is supported by two uprights sunk in the ground. Horizontal boughs are laid and tied across the arched ones, and the whole is covered with leaves to within about two feet of the ground. The result is a long shelter open completely on three sides and partly open on the fourth, with a curved roof that forms the rear wall. A man and his wife can put one up in half an hour. When there are many people the house may be doubled so that instead of the arch being like this:



it looks like this:

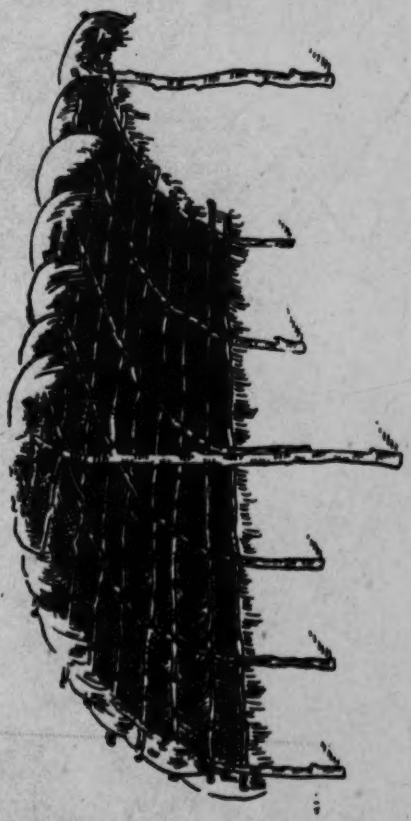
If people arrive unexpectedly the house can be extended indefinitely by the addition of transverse beams.

[334] 513 On the edge of the long side of the house long logs are laid for the fires; and the Indians sleep in a row with their feet to the fire. Since these houses are not partitioned into family rooms the opportunity for anyone to gratify his curiosity is limited only by the height of the flames and by his good manners. At night when the men have come in and the flames are leaping, the pots bubbling, and the meat roasting, the houses fill with blinding smoke. After supper the fires die down, and it is pitch-dark beyond the faint red glow of the coals. A few hours later it is impossible to see what is going on, and even the Indians cannot tell which dark bulk is Vomblé and which his wife, Kulí. Although everyone is careful to provide a place for himself when camp is made, there is no certainty that he will actually sleep there, for the Kaingáng are nomadic even in their sleep. Although Véye may eat with his wife he may get up to wander over to Chukembégn's fire for a few nuts and to Waipó's for a bit of fruit, and if sleep overtakes him at Waipó's he will sleep there. Perhaps later in the night when the chill and stiffness have crept into his bones he will get up and wander sleepily over

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma

PLATE I

342



House

[P.140 (A)]

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma

make it with a fire drill. They cut a piece of dry white canela about an inch thick, two inches wide, and two feet long and make a hole in it about half an inch deep, with a shallow groove on each side—Heaven knows what for[10]—extending over the edges of the stick. They also cut a smaller branch about a quarter of an inch in diameter and a foot and a half long; this is the drill. The Indian spits on his hands, places the drill in the hole, and begins to whirl the stick between his two palms, moving them up and down as he does so. After ten minutes he has no fire; so he calls another Indian and they alternate in whirling the drill. In five minutes more a wisp of smoke from the hole raises their hopes. They remove the drill and look—no spark. For five minutes more they drill, and then the spark comes. Sometimes the spark is on the end of the drill; sometimes it is on the side of the hole. Now the spark is placed on some dry palm leaves, and they blow on it until the leaves burst into flame.

I once saw two men attempt to make a fire with a three-foot base on which they could put their feet and a drill three feet long made of a long bamboo tube with a canela tip inserted at the bottom. They worked for twelve minutes without result. When a third man helped them they succeeded in obtaining a spark.

No sexual symbolism attaches to the fire-making apparatus.

Houses

Houses are built under pressure. It is theoretically woman's work, but in the excitement of sudden rain men and women cooperate. The woman goes for leaves for covering while the man cuts and sinks the heavy uprights and lighter boughs which are sharpened to a point at one end. He digs no hole for them but sinks them into the ground by raising them and throwing them repeatedly, with unerring eye, into the same hole, making it deeper with each throw. Sometimes two convenient trees are used as uprights. If the Indian should perchance decide to build the house long before the storm actually breaks and finds the ground is hard and dry he moistens the soil with whatever is at hand, even tapir soup.

When the uprights are in place the transverse is bound on about eight[11] feet above the ground. Now light boughs are sunk into the ground about nine feet in back of the uprights, *sloping away from them*, making an angle about 60° with the ground so that when they are bent over they will not break out. They are lifted and thrown into the ground just as the uprights were. The boughs are bent over and lashed to the transverse with

[10] What sparks were obtained were always in the hole itself or on the tip of the drill.

[11] Naturally if a house is built entirely by a woman it will be lower than if it is built by a man. Women may bind sloping posts against the uprights so that they can stand on them and reach high. The height of the house is much more variable than the width.

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma

cipo or with palmito bark. The lashings are never knotted but twisted. When the arches have been formed—the number depends of course on the size of the house—transverse boughs are laid across them about nine inches apart and bound. The lashing is passed around both the transverse and the arched bough, and the two are approximated by pushing on the arch with one hand and pulling on the transverse with the lashing. For the lower transverses the foot and knee are used instead of the hand. All the lashing is done from the inside of the house, i.e. on the concave side of the arch. The arch is now covered from the inside with bunches of leaves by a simple weaving technique. The leaves are so placed that the tips hang over the lowest transverse (about a yard from the ground). The first transverse under which the stems are carried is about the fifth. Short separate sprays of leaves are also used, but because of their shortness they are carried under the third transverse. When there seems to be a chance that the bunches of leaves will slip they are tied, but generally they are not. In this way the entire arch is covered, each new bunch of leaves always overlapping that below. Now and then even in the pouring rain a woman will stop building to suckle her child. Every once in a while someone goes for leaves. *kuglathkyd* leaves are preferred for housebuilding because of their durability and the large coverage afforded by each bunch of leaves. The Brazilian settlers use them to thatch their houses, and they are called *palha* in Portuguese. If the Kaingáng have no *palha* they use palm fronds, or if they are in a grassy region they use grass. If there is no *palha*, palm, or grass they use bamboo leaves. Lacking all these, they sleep in the rain.

Since the arches in the house just described reach only to the main transverse that is supported on the two uprights and the ends of the house are not covered it is obvious that the house is completely open on three sides. There is another type of house, however, in which the arches make complete semicircles, with each leg of the arch imbedded in the ground. Such a house is really nothing but two of the simpler kind set facing each other, and that is the way such houses usually spring into existence. Sometimes, however, the entire thing is conceived and constructed as a unit, in which case the overlapping arches are bound to one another. Sometimes the Kaingáng make a simple lean-to by resting a bunch of palm fronds against the branch of a tree. Kaingáng houses are often built by more than one family in cooperation, but once the framework has been erected cooperative attitudes are dropped. Each family covers its own section of the house with leaves and remains completely indifferent to the fate of the other inhabitants.

Once, on their own initiative, the Kaingáng built for me a house of the type they say they inhabited when they dwelt in the savannahs and cultivated the soil. This house needed the cooperation of eight men, three of

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma

342 whom worked steadily. A heavy central pole nine feet high was sunk in the ground. Then a "ladder," i.e. a pole sloping from the ground to a point about four feet above the ground on the central pole, was tied to it so that the workers could reach the top of the central post. Six poles were sunk in a circle around the central post, about two yards from it, making the maximum diameter of the house approximately four yards.[12] Each pole was bent over toward the central post, caught by a man standing on the "ladder," and bound in place about a foot from the top. Five men worked to maneuver one pole so that it might be bent and bound: two held it in place, a third pushed it into an arc toward the center, and a fourth standing on the ladder pulled it down and in. The two arches first erected were separated widely to leave room for passage. When the arches were in place transverses were bound to them, the first one eight inches above the ground. The ends of the transverses were bound together. This frame was covered with *palha* and palm fronds all the way to the top.

Weapons

Bows

411 The Kaingáng told me that in order to make a bow a *kakŏnggãla*[13] tree is cut down and the trunk cut into sections and split with wedges. The desirable piece is then further reduced in cross section with an axe, and pointed at both ends with a knife. Then it is heated in the fire, rubbed with wax, and heated again. A short post with a fork at its upper end is sunk in the ground and braced with a second post. The bow is placed in the crotch, bent, and held in this position by another short post sunk in the ground. When the bow has been in the crotch for some time and thus permanently bent to its proper shape it is taken out and worked to the proper smoothness. This is all done by one person.

Nowadays Kaingáng bows have no howler-monkey tails on them, but at the time of the pacification the Kaingáng used to slip these tails over their bows to strengthen them. Whenever a howler monkey was killed they would cut off its tail, turn it inside out, and slip it over a stick of the same cross section as their bows. When they were dry they would turn them right side out and put them on their bows. One informant told me that the ancients used the tails of lizards. I never saw bows made.

[12] Exactly 3.80 meters.

[13] Known in Brazil as the *cabiúna*, a large tree yielding one of the finest and strongest hard woods of the Brazilian forests. The Kaingáng bow is from six to seven feet long and was often used as a club.

262 They acquired the habit of eating chrysalids and larvae of all kinds, especially the maggot found in rotting wood [coró] which they eat raw as well as roasted, or cooked on the fire inside a bamboo sprout. Then necessity turned into habit; although the need no longer remains, the Indians continue to seek out chrysalids and larvae as refined changes of diet.

224 When the warriors are gone for long periods of time, the women catch small game by means of snares and traps, for they do not wield any weapons.

226 Curiously enough, the Botocudo are not familiar with fishing, even in its most primitive form, though rivers abounding with fish are to be found in their area.

262 177 Before the time of peaceful contact, they were already familiar with maize, squash and manioc flour, which they obtained in the course of their raids on civilized communities. But they were altogether unfamiliar with potatoes, the manioc tuber, beans, rice, yams, the taro root, etc., which they have since come to know and which they greatly value.

342 The Botocudo set up their shelters by driving slender stakes close together into the ground. [122] These sticks are bent in the shape of a bow, and their tip secured to a heavy horizontal rod which is usually fastened in two trees at the height of a man. The resulting dome-shaped roof is covered with palm leaves, brush, or ferns. A lateral area of about one meter is always left open to permit observation toward the rear and thus avoid any surprises. The fire is lit on the exposed side of the shelter, and the Indians watch over it continually to make sure that it does not go out.

Each of these huts is utilized by a single family.

[361] The shelters are lined evenly in parallel groups of two to eight huts which together form a camp.

When circumstances such as celebrations or the Araucaria seed harvest compel them to remain in the same place for a longer period of time, they build their huts with greater care and make them larger. Two shelters are built face to face and their roofing connected so that the curved sticks are secured to each other instead of being fastened to a horizontal rod. This results in a perfect vault. Each of these enlarged

342 shelters holds several couples belonging to the same family. Each couple has its own fire in the center of the hut. These shelters, like the smaller ones, remain open laterally about one meter from the ground.

Inside the shelter, on either side, a broad earth shelf is laid to serve as a pillow.

[513] The floor of the hut is completely covered with fern leaves. The related couples lie down upon it to sleep side by side, their head on the elevated earth shelf and their feet toward the fire.

352 Weapons, baskets, clothes and utensils are hung from the ceiling of the shelter, and smaller objects are kept in the thatch.

291 The warriors' attire consists of several "loin cords" which they use as belts and which are ornaments rather than true breechcloths.

[233] These cords, called masêna, are braided in two varieties: dark, made of imbó liana bark fibers; and white, made of palm fibers.

The same palm fiber cords are also worn tightly fastened above the ankles.

The women's attire consists of an apron 1.60 meters in width and 1.50 meters in length.

It does not take them long to dress, for they simply fold the apron in two and wrap it around the waist.

[234] These aprons are woven with the fiber of a special kind of wild [231] nettle, and adorned with linear figures drawn preferably in red or blue.

302 Their hair is cut on the forehead in a semicircle which extends to the parietal region, where it is shaved at an acute angle toward the ear. In the back it is clipped above the shoulders. An even circle five centimeters in diameter is shaved on the crown and kept in good trim.

This hairdo is worn by all adults, male and female.

301 On festive occasions the warriors make headdresses with the 292 feathers of a bird they call cocolina (Aquila?), which they connect 237 by means of a network of thin [123] embira fibers. When decked in these ornaments, their head, face and chest painted with red and black stripes, they acquire a very impressive appearance.

On these formal occasions, the women and a few of the warriors tangle into their hair the delicate multicolored feathers of various small birds.